

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (New) A method, comprising:
obtaining an electronic version of a contract;
obtaining biometric information from at least one party to the contract; and
associating the biometric information with the contract to uniquely identify the party to the contract.
5. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein associating the biometric information with the contract to uniquely identify the party to the contract further comprises attaching an electronic representation of the biometric information to the contract.
6. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 5, wherein associating the biometric information with the contract to uniquely identify the party to the contract further comprises storing the electronic contract and the electronic representation of the biometric information in a database.
7. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 5, wherein associating the biometric information with the contract to uniquely identify the party to the contract further comprises encoding and storing the electronic contract and the electronic representation of the biometric information in a database.

8. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 4, wherein obtaining biometric information from at least one party to the contract further comprises obtaining at least one fingerprint from at least one party to the contract.
9. (New) A method, as set forth in claim 6, wherein obtaining at least one fingerprint from at least one party to the contract further comprises obtaining an electronic representation of at least one fingerprint from at least one party to the contract.
10. (New) An apparatus, comprising:
means for obtaining an electronic version of a contract;
means for obtaining biometric information from at least one party to the contract; and
means for associating the biometric information with the contract to uniquely identify the party to the contract.
11. (New) An apparatus, comprising:
an electronic contract;
a device adapted for obtaining biometric information from a party to the electronic contract;
means for associating the biometric information with the electronic contract.
12. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 11, wherein the means for associating comprises a database adapted for receiving and storing the electronic contract and the biometric information.

13. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 12, further comprising an encoder adapted to encode the electronic contract and biometric information stored in the database.
14. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 12 further comprising a server adapted to store said database, and a computing device coupled to said server via a network, said computing device having said device adapted for obtaining biometric information coupled thereto.
15. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 14, wherein said server and said computing device are remotely located relative to each other.
16. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said network coupling together the server and the computing device is an intranet.
17. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said network coupling together the server and the computing device is an internet.
18. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 14, wherein the server is a web server and the computing device includes a web browser for communicating with the web server.
19. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 11, wherein the device adapted for obtaining biometric information is adapted to obtain at least one fingerprint of a party to the electronic contract.

20. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 19, wherein the device adapted for obtaining biometric information is a biometric application programming interface (bioAPI) consortium compliant device.
21. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 19, wherein the device adapted for obtaining biometric information is a biometric application programming interface (bioAPI) consortium compliant fingerprint scanning device.
22. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 14, further comprising means for comparing the biometric information to a set of stored biometric information to verify the identify of a person associated with the biometric information.
23. (New) An apparatus, as set forth in claim 22, further comprising means for declining the signature in response to failing to verify the identity of the person associated with the biometric information.